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# THE EMERALD BOOK

*A FEW FACTS BRIEFLY TOLD*

BY  
SHREVE & CO.



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# THE EMERALD BOOK

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# THE EMERALD BOOK

## F O R E W O R D

**O**F ALL stones classified among the "precious," the Emerald is the fullest of poetic suggestion. Its color is nature's favorite and its rarity lends a charm and mystery ever fascinating to the human mind and heart.

Bewildering mists of uncounted ages enshroud its past. Unknown and mysterious forces of nature work with weights and powers irresistible for æons of time to mould and shape the precious bits of undying light, and Nature counts no time, effort, or cost, but constructs with a dreadful patience until her purpose is accomplished, and the substance of her toil lies at last embedded in her very heart of hearts. Then, as though the treasure lying hidden away from the eyes of men were too precious to keep from her human creatures, she whispers something of her secret through the forests, and fresh watered spots—telling of the Emerald. The green places of the earth and the kindly deeps of the sun-touched sea, breathe promises of peace and good, all the while whispering fragments of the Secret and rumors of the Hidden Treasure.

## WHAT IS THE EMERALD?

IT IS not proposed by the publishers of this booklet to give a lengthy or scientific treatise upon the Emerald, but rather to tell simply some interesting facts in as few words as may be, avoiding when possible, technical terms and superfluous scientific word usages. There are many who want to know a *little* of the subject from plain, intelligent interest—a suggestion of the whole for everyday uses.

*What is the Emerald?* It is a *green Beryl*, but being *green* it takes the name of "Emerald," or the rarest variety of Beryls. From whence or by what influences it gets its color, scientists are at variance; some asserting that the presence of organic matter produces the hue, while others hold to the opinion that an *oxide of chromium* is responsible for the Emerald green. The latter theory is the one given most credit. The true Beryl, or Aquamarine, is frequently found, but an Emerald without flaw, muddiness or structural defect is virtually unknown. Over two-thirds of the Emerald is composed of *silica*, the remaining parts of *alumina*, *glucina*, etc.

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During ages of nature's working the Emerald crystallizes in hexagonal forms and finally becomes a six or a twelve sided prism, and is found embedded in veins of *white calcite* and *iron pyrites*, and often loose in pockets or cavities. The Emerald was known to the Ancients and much esteemed by them, but accurate knowledge regarding the stone seemed not to exist, for the collector and connoisseur is known to have had green glass passed off upon him as the genuine stone.

Nero was short-sighted and used an Emerald to adjust his vision—but not his morals. Curious superstitions enshroud the Emerald, often almost humorous. But a sympathetic lover of precious stones finds his intelligence leaning towards these harmless traditions and taking a happy satisfaction in them. In this channel of research we find that the Emerald has been used medicinally. Claims have been made that it was an antidote to poisons. An old German physician used it in all diseases of the heart, and other records have it that "placing a Beryl (the Emerald's sister) in water, the water will be moved," or made partially effervescent. Old wiseacres assert that the Emerald is good for

troublesome eyes, and moralists claim for the Emerald a salutary influence upon the baser passions, as it preserved the chastity of the wearer, or if the wearer was too bad a subject, the stone broke into atoms—this last claim seems, however, to have been disproved in the case of Nero. Ancient India, Egypt and Greece knew and prized the Emerald, and to this day, remains of old mines exist at Sikait, in Africa near the border of Egypt; from these mines many of the early stones probably came; but until the latter part of the 16th Century the Emerald was very rare in Europe.

The invasion of South and Central America by the Spaniards was the reason of more of these precious stones being known. A story is told of Spanish marauders who, after their conquest of Peru, where butchery, rapine and ruthless vandalism marked their path—returned to their own land with *two cases* of Emeralds “each weighing an hundred weight.”

The Peruvians considered the Emerald sacred and adorned the temples of their Gods with wonderful gems, this stone for superstitious reasons being considered most acceptable to the Gods. Marvels of lapidary work

existed among the Aztecs, for the Emerald was cut by them into many shapes of birds, flowers, fishes and insects. The wonder of this may be comprehended when the hardness of the Emerald is considered, for there are but *ten* harder precious stones; apropos of this, the Spanish marauders are known to have destroyed many priceless gems in crude tests and experiments. Gorged with blood and loot, blinded by avaricious skepticism and doubt, their red, blundering hands obliterated at a stroke, many of these wonders of Nature's working, perfected through stretches of incalculable time.

The finest Emeralds of modern times are taken from the mines of the Republic of Columbia, which were discovered and worked by the Spanish in 1555, and it is from this country on the banks of the Minero north of Bogota, that the choicest Emeralds are still found. Examples of lesser value are found in Burmah, Ural (Europe), Austria, East India, Australia and the United States. Emeralds of really fine color have been found in North Carolina and vast sums have been expended to develop the mines, and though Emerald crystals are abundant, they are not sufficiently transparent; lacking this requi-

site the mine has proved unpaying and has been abandoned.

A curious fact about the Emerald is that when first mined it is very soft, but immediately takes an exceeding hardness upon exposure to the air.

*Olivines* of fine green resemble the Emerald but their weight is greater, and their lights are "fatty" or lacking in scintillating brilliancy.

### TO CONCLUDE

From these few facts about the Emerald it may be readily understood what great interest the stone excites. Its whole history is absorbing; it sparkles with mysterious significance, gleams with poetic suggestion, and *practically* lures the critical student to deeper thought and analytical study.



T H E E M E R A L D

**G**EM of the Earth, fair gift of the Sea,  
Soul of the Soil and Waves,  
Hoard of a God that saves  
Each gleam and glow for a time to be  
Comfort and Peace, when a Misery  
Taps at Thy door.

Green of the fields, when the glowing Sun  
Follows the fall of rain,  
Warm with his gold again,  
Fabric of Joy from the meshes spun.  
Peace of the Earth—from the Sea rest won  
In endless store.

Glow of the Soil and flash of the Sea,  
Green of the yielding Earth,  
Gleam of the New Day's Birth,  
Symbol of Joy in futurity,  
Light of a fair maturity,  
Gleam ever more !

J. M.

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### T H E     M A Y     C H I L D

The Babe whose eyes first open  
To see the light of Day,  
When Earth in flowery glory  
Proclaims the month of May,  
Shall be the ward of Fortune,  
His days with joy be rife  
For the Spirit of the Emerald  
Shall guard the Youngling's life.

### THE EMERALD, MAID AND WIFE

The luckiest Maid in all the land—  
The luckiest Wife is she  
Who wears the Emerald on her hand,  
Thrice lucky shall she be.  
The luckiest Mother too is she  
Whose babe first sees the Day  
When the world is gay and flowery—  
There's luck i' "the Emerald May."

Rhymes adapted from old Birthstone jingles.



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## A S U M M A R Y

**THE EMERALD** Is the Grass Green Variety of the Beryl. The Aquamarine, chrysolite (greenish yellow) and golden Beryl complete the Beryl class.

**WHERE FOUND** The finest are found in the Republic of Columbia. The less valued in Austria, Russia, Egypt, Australia and the United States.

**HARDNESS** 7.5 to 7.8, Specific Gravity 2.65 to 2.75 ; somewhat lighter than Aquamarine.

**LUSTRE** Vitreous: transparent to translucent.

**COMPOSITION** 68 % Silica. Alumina, 15 to 20 %; Glucina, etc., 11 to 14%. Coloring matter probably an oxide of Chromium or organic matter.

**COLOR** All shades of green. The *gem* color however is a clear rich velvety green.

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### S U M M A R Y—*C o n t i n u e d*

CUTTING Usually “step” cut, straight facets which decrease in length as they recede from the “girdle” (portion of greatest area)—or *en cabochon*—flat with a *convex* top surface.

SYMBOLIZES Immortality, incorruptibility, perfected happiness. *Month*—May. *Apostle*—John.

THE LARGEST Emerald known is owned by the Duke of Devonshire and is a six-sided prism, weighing 1350 Karats, of good color, transparent and clean.

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**D**URING the Eighteenth Century, in France and England there was a quaint custom of setting bracelets, rings, and brooches with gems, the first letters of which form some motto or spell some pretty sentiment. The following is the accepted alphabetical arrangement for Precious Stones :—

A—Amethyst	H—Hyacinth	Q—Quartz
Alexandrite	Hiddenite	R—Ruby
Almandine	I —Idocrase	S—Sapphire
B—Beryl	Iolite	T—Topaz
C—Chrysoberyl	J —Jargoon	Tourmaline
Carbuncle	K—Kyanite	U—Uranite
Cymophane	L—Lynx Sapphire	V—Vesuvianite
D—Diamond	M—Moonstone	W—Water Sapphire
E—Emerald	N—Natrolite	X—Xanthite
F—Feldspar	O—Opal	Z—Zircon
G—Garnet	P—Peridot	

**T**HE vowel "E" is the letter appearing oftenest in the formation of English words, so "Emerald" has a sentimental importance, as in the following combination of words, and many others:—

L-ynx Sapphire	D-iamond	L-ynx Sapphire
O-pal	E-merald	O-pal
V-esuvianite	A-methyst	V-esuvianite
E-merald	R-uby	E-merald
H-yacinth	E-merald	
O-pal	S-apphire	M-oonstone
P-eridot	T-opaz	E-merald
E-merald		

Etcetera, etcetera, as found without end in "Love's vocabulary."

THE following passage is an extract from Ruskin's "Ethics of the Dust;" it seems appropriate and gives a simple picture charmingly told of the *Crystal's* struggle for existence:

"Then when he was a little older, came more clay; and poured itself upon him here, at the side; and he has laid crystal over that, and lived on, in his purity. Then the clay came on at his angles, and tried to cover them, and round them away; but upon that he threw out buttress-crystals at his angles, all as true to his own central line as chapels round a cathedral apse; and clustered them round the clay; and conquered it again. At last the clay came on at his summit, and tried to blunt his summit; but he could not endure that for an instant; and left his flanks all rough, but pure; and fought the clay at his crest, and built crest over crest and peak over peak, till the clay surrendered at last, and here is his summit, smooth and pure, terminating a pyramid of alternate clay and crystal!"

# A FEW BOOKS AS GOOD AUTHORITIES UPON THE PRECIOUS STONE:

"History and Mystery of Precious Stones," by W. Jones, Chatto & Windus, *London*; "Natural History of Precious Stones," C. W. King, Geo. Bell & Sons, *London*; "Precious Stones and Gems," E. W. Streeter, Geo. Bell & Sons, *London*; "Precious Stones," S. M. Burnham, *New York*; "The Story of Famous Precious Stones," A. E. R. Orpan, Putnam, *New York*; "Hand Book of Precious Stones," M. D. Rothschild, Putnam, *New York*; "Gems and Precious Stones," G. F. Kunz, Scientific Publishing Co., *New York* (at present out of print); "Precious Stones," W. R. Cattelle, J. B. Lippincott, *New York*.

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